

Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DRC-01 DODE-00

H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-19 /159 W

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P R 121023Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8602

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 3262

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SF

SUBJECT: STRIKING MINE WORKERS SHOT BY POLICE

1. ACCORDING TO SABC'S SEPTEMBER 12 MORNING NEWSCAST,
POLICE OPENED FIRE ON RIOTING BLACK STRIKERS AT ANGLO-
AMERICAN'S WESTERN DEEP LEVELS GOLD MINE, CARLETONVILLE,
TRANVAAL, DURING EARLY HOURS SEPTEMBER 12, KILLING
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ELEVEN WORKERS.

2. FULL TEXT OF SABC REPORT FOLLOWS: QUOTE. THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE-DESIGNATE LT. GEN. CROUS HAS DISCLOSED IN PRETORIA THAT ELEVEN BLACK MINE WORKERS WERE KILLED AND NINE WERE INJURED WHEN THE POLICE WERE FORCED TO OPEN FIRE IN SELF-DEFENSE DURING A DISTURBANCE AT WESTERN DEEP LEVELS GOLD MINE. THE UNREST AT THE MINE BEGAN YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WHEN BETWEEN 40 AND 70 BLACK WORKERS DEMANDED HIGHER WAGES FROM THE MINE MANAGEMENT. THE DEMAND WAS TURNED DOWN. THE WORKERS LATER ASSUMED A THREATENING ATTITUDE AND TRIED TO SET FIRE TO THE MINE OFFICE. POLICE WERE CALLED IN AND THEY USED TEAR GAS IN AN ATTEMPT TO DISPERSE THE CROWD. THE MINERS TRIED REPEATEDLY TO ATTACK THE POLICE WITH AXES. A POLICE SERGEANT WAS INJURED IN THE PROCESS. THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE MR. KRUGER TOLD OUR PRETORIA NEWS STAFF THIS MORNING THAT THE POLICE OPENED FIRE ONLY IN EXTREME CASES AND ONLY IN SELF-DEFENSE. IN THIS CASE, THE POLICE HAD NO CHOICE. MR. KRUGER EXPRESSED HIS DEEPEST REGRET THAT SUCH ACTION HAD BEEN NECESSARY AND ALSO EXPRESSED HIS SYMPATHY WITH THE RELATIVES OF THOSE KILLED. MR. KRUGER SAID FEELINGS HAD RUN SO HIGH DURING THE DISTURBANCE THAT A TWELFTH BLACK WORKER HAD BEEN KILLED BY THE CROWD. EIGHT OF THOSE INJURED WERE HURT IN CLASHES WITH OTHER WORKERS. MR. KRUGER POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE MORE THAN 8,000 MINE WORKERS IN THE COMPOUND AND THAT THE POLICE ACTION HAD PREVENTED PANIC. THE SITUATION AT THE MINE IS NOW CALM. UNQUOTE.

3. WE UNDERSTAND THAT GENERAL CROUS AND OTHER OFFICIALS ARE MEETING URGENTLY WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER THIS MORNING TO DISCUSS SHOOTINGS. FURTHER OFFICIAL STATEMENT MAY FOLLOW, PERHAPS BY VORSTER DURING HIS SCHEDULED ADDRESS TONIGHT AT RRANSVAAL NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS IN PRETORIA.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST INCIDENT DURING LAST DECADE IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH COULD -- AND UNDOUBTEDLY WILL -- BE COMPARED WITH NOTORIOUS SHARPEVILLE SHOOTINGS. IT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POINTS UP SERIOUS BLACK LABOR UNREST AND FRAGILE RACE RELATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA TODAY. IMMEDIATE QUESTION IS WHETHER THIS IS ISOLATED INCIDENT OR WHETHER IT WILL TRIGGER FURTHER VIOLENCE AT CARLETONVILLE AND ELSEWHERE AND STRONG SAG COUNTER-MEASURES. AT THIS TIME, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT FURTHER INCIDENTS WILL OCCUR, ALTHOUGH WAVE OF DOMESTIC CONDEMNATIONS, FROM BLACKS AND WHITES ALIKE, CAN BE EXPECTED.

SMITH

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 12 SEP 1973
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Disposition Authority: garlanwa
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Errors: N/A
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